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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Italian Company wants to buy Turkish Aerospace Industry -
Hurriyet
Turkish businessmen promise \$10,000,000 for tsunami victims
- Hurriyet
ITF: U.S. allows 100,000 more Kurds to vote in Kirkuk -
Hurriyet
Buyukanit: We will not withdraw a single soldier from Cyprus
- Hurriyet
Erdogan takes Cyprus and EU issues to Davos - Sabah
Iraqi soldiers accused of torture - Sabah
Ankara concerned about Kurdish population in Kirkuk -
Milliyet
Cyprus warning from Buyukanit - Aksam
'PKK parties' to participate in Iraqi elections - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

Turkish military will not withdraw from Cyprus - Cumhuriyet
60th anniversary of Auschwitz - Cumhuriyet
Bush requests \$80,000,000 more for military operations -
Cumhuriyet
Koruturk carries Turkey's Kirkuk concerns to England -
Cumhuriyet
Al-Qaeda threat to voters in Iraq - Radikal
Competition intensifies in Northern Iraq as election
approaches - Radikal
Election chaos in Iraq - Yeni Safak
Torture continues in Iraq - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

General Buyukanit Comments: All papers report Land Forces
Commander General Yasar Buyukanit's comments on a possible
Turkish troop withdrawal from Cyprus. During his visit to
the 'TRNC' to inspect Turkish military units there,
Buyukanit assured Denktas that Turkish troops will remain in
Cyprus until a lasting peace agreement has been reached.
"Aksam" says Buyukanit's comments were like a warning to the
Turkish government and the EU just before the Davos meeting.
"Milliyet" reports that the Turkish government and
bureaucrats in the Foreign Ministry disagree on their
approach to the Cyprus issue. The Foreign Ministry believes
that the embargo on North Cyprus could be lifted through
diplomatic channels, and Ministry officials are worried that
Erdogan may make concessions on the withdrawal of Turkish
troops. The government, in turn, believes the Greek
Cypriots will veto the opening of EU accession talks with
Turkey and will press for a new Cyprus initiative before
October 3. "Milliyet" adds that Buyukanit's statement was
intended to prevent possible concessions on the part of
Turkey.

Turkish Concerns on Kirkuk: "Milliyet" and "Cumhuriyet"
report that Turkey's concerns are growing over the
'artificially increased' Kurdish population in Kirkuk as the
elections approach. "Milliyet" claims that the Kurds had
signed a 'secret agreement' with the Iraqi Interim
Government and US and UK Ambassadors under which Kirkuk will
become part of the Kurdish region 'no matter what the
outcome of the January 30 elections.' The agreement
allegedly provides for a referendum on the status of Kirkuk
followed by a rerun of Kirkuk local elections in 11 months.
The agreement allows 108,000 Kurds from outside of Kirkuk to
be added to voter rolls in advance of Sunday's vote.
"Cumhuriyet" reminds that PUK leader Talabani triggered more
controversy with his statement that the US and Britain had
given written guarantees to the Kurds about Kirkuk. US
sources say the interim Iraqi constitution had outlined the
principles of return of displaced people to Kirkuk, and that

Washington would not allow any settlement beyond these principles. Yesterday, Turkey's special Iraq envoy Osman Koruturk went to Britain to discuss these concerns. Meanwhile, the Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) announced that, despite the concerns of the Turkmen about the fairness of the election registration process, the ITF will participate in Sunday's elections.

PM Erdogan Solicits Money for Tsunami Victims: In a dinner at Istanbul's Dolmabahce Palace, PM Erdogan urged Turkey's top businessmen to contribute funds for relief efforts in South Asia. The PM plans to travel to the affected region February 5. Business leaders reportedly pledged 10 million USD to help victims of the tsunami. During his speech, Erdogan said that Turkey should 'stay ahead of Greece' in the amount of relief assistance. He also described as 'saddening' information suggesting that some groups were 'trying to Christianize Muslim children' in South Asia as a part of relief efforts.

Palestinian Leader Abbas Will Visit Turkey: "Zaman" reports that Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, will come to Turkey on February 1 to seek support for the peace process. Abbas will have meetings with President Sezer and PM Erdogan.

Italian Company Wants to Buy Turkish Airspace Industry (TAI): "Hurriyet" reports that the Italian defense industry giant Alenia is interested in buying the Turkish Aerospace Industry (TAI), which currently produces F-16 jetfighters. The report claims that Alenia's offer is part of an effort to make Turkey a 'primary ally' with Europe in defense production.

EDITORIAL OPINION:

-- The Iraq Election
-- US Requests of Turkey

"The Election in Iraq"
Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative, nationalist "Turkiye" (01/26): There is an election in Iraq this Sunday, and Washington is pinning impossible hopes on its outcome. The US will not be able to claim, as it could in Afghanistan, that it has 'brought democracy' to Iraq following the election. Democracy is no easy matter. Turkey only fulfilled the final criteria over the past few months, and there are still some shortcomings. The truth is that in both Afghanistan and Iraq, cruel and medieval regimes were brought to an end. But both countries remain in deep distress. They are still struggling with poverty and severe shortages. The elections in Iraq are going to turn disagreements among the religious and ethnic groups into open hostility. The results, which will never be accepted by the Sunni Arabs or the Turkmen, will bring civil war. It will also likely widen the gulf between Washington and Ankara. Perhaps America wants an Iraq that is worn down by civil war. The Americans may be considering returning to establish security in Iraq after they are through with other countries. By 'other countries,' I mean Iraq and Syria. The Syrian President is in Moscow, and he is looking to purchase missiles. But Syrian military forces are on the verge of collapse, and cannot be revived with a few missiles. The most powerful army in the region was Saddam's army in Iraq, and it couldn't even do battle with the Americans. How can Syria do anything more? With regard to Iran, it seems doubtful that the US could occupy a country four times more populous than Iraq. But the Americans will never allow Tehran to become a nuclear power. We can expect a US operation similar to the one carried out in Serbia. As the Iranians have taken most of their nuclear facilities underground, the issue cannot be resolved by Israeli airstrikes. But there is also no chance that another country will take on the Americans by coming to the active military aid of Iran. Under these conditions, the Greater Middle East project will be taken into a new phase immediately after the Iraq elections. This new phase will be designed according to the preferences of Dr. Condoleezza Rice. Our General Staff will have something to say about these things at a press conference later today.

"The Election in Iraq"
Hikmet Bila commented in the leftist, nationalist "Cumhuriyet" (01/26): "Elections will be held in Iraq this weekend. Iraq's land borders will be closed for three days. Airports will be closed to traffic for two days. No foreign observers will be present. For security reasons, the media will follow the elections from neighboring countries. Private cars won't be allowed on the streets for three days. There is no security. The addresses of polling stations and the lists of candidates are being kept secret. Many Kurds have been brought in to Kirkuk from elsewhere to vote. Some election officials been killed, others have fled. The Iraqi people are being targeted by the weapons of the occupiers. The Sunni Muslims have decided not to participate in the

elections. Local people are hungry, thirsty, and living without electricity or medicine. And Iraq is going to go to elections under these circumstances. This is a strategic disgrace! What I mean is that 'elections', 'democracy,' and 'ballot boxes' are being used as cover for a battle to control world resources. Can this really be called democracy? Under these circumstances, could the results of these elections really have any validity? It is obvious that a Shiite administration will emerge from the elections. But how long can a Shiite majority cooperate with the Kurdish minority? Will the Sunni population allow a Shiite-Kurdish administration? A possible civil war in Iraq will be followed by civil unrest in neighboring countries. If the US had aimed to create chaos in the Middle East with the occupation of Iraq, we can say that it has been fully successful. I still wonder where Turkey stands in this process."

"Turkey's Open and Secret Agenda"

Tayfun Iclicli wrote in left-leaning "Birgun" (01/26): "The United States has made a number of requests from Turkey, especially in the military area. At the top of the list is the broader use of Incirlik Air Base, which is of critical importance to all operations in the Middle East. According to information that has leaked out, the US is considering the operational use of Incirlik above and beyond Iraq. We can find what is being asked of Turkey, both in the near and medium term, by reading between the lines of statements by Vice President Cheney and CENTCOM Commander General John Abizaid. In effect, they are saying: 'Israel, to get out from under the coming nuclear threat from the regime in Tehran, may decide to intervene there before any other country. We are also upset by Iran's activities in Iraq. Iranian efforts are intended above all to threaten regional peace. We are not going to stand by and watch as the Iranians try to destabilize the region.' General Abizaid gave a similar message on Syria, claiming that the Syrians are supporting the remnants of the Iraqi Baathist regime. Meanwhile, former presidential candidate John Kerry has warned that Kirkuk could 'explode' after the elections as a result of the Kurdish issue. He has also argued that current US policies are facilitating the spread of the insurgency in Iraq. It seems clear that the waters in Iraq are going to heat up after the January 30 elections. The US will pass into a new phase in its policy for the region, and it will not be limited to Iraq. As in the past, Turkey is the country that will be most damaged by all of this. The United States wants to use Turkey as a 'central base' in the Greater Middle East project. For this reason, Turkey should take a clear position against possible US actions in Syria and Iran and should not keep secrets from the Turkish people about issues that affect our country's interests."EDELMAN